

Al Qurba

- By Syed Nadeem Ahmed Jafri

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

While going through one of the commentaries of the holy Quran I came across a commentator who tried to prove that the ayah 42:23

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

does not refer to the near relatives of the holy Prophet (SAW) i.e. the Panjetan Paak (as) though the phrase Mawaddata fil qurba means **love with the nearones**. He opined that from the heights of Prophethood the holy Prophet (SAW) could not have asked the ummah to love his family as a reward of his hardwork of messengership. He reasoned that this would not have suited the stature of his Prophethood. The other reasoning he gave was that the Surah-e-Shura was revealed in Mecca and then Syeda Fatema (sa) was not married to Imam Ali (as) and hence there is no question of inclusion of Imam Hasan (as) and Imam Hussain (as) in this ayah.

Our friend commentator did not take into considerations **many ahadith** from the authentic sources **which counter his arguments**. Also **the ayahs of Quran are universal** and this **message is a universal message for the ummah present in different era** and hence whether it was revealed in Mecca or not does not matter here. **The household of the holy Prophet (SAW) is purified and is devoid of any impurity** as confirmed in the holy Quran (33:33) and thus **to follow them is to be guided to the straight path** and hence it was not for his personal gain but it was more **for the betterment of ummah that the Prophet (SAW) asked us to love his nearones**.

For a moment if we agree with the commentator that Al Qurba does not refer to the Panjetan Paak (as) as Syeda Fatema (sa) was not married to Imam Ali (as) at the time of the revelation of the above ayah, we can still ask him that would not Fatema (sa) - the only **daughter of the holy Prophet (SAW)** be **the reference point** in this ayah since **she was there in Mecca** when **the Surah was revealed**? So if she was the part of Al Qurba would not **her subsequent family** eventually **be the part of Al Qurba**?

➔ It is 20th Jamadil Aakher, the anniversary of revelation of the light of Fatema (sa) – one of Allah's purest creations, the epitome of piety. And I have started writing this as a tribute to this greatest lady on earth and the Mistress of Paradise. May the Almighty give me enough strength and knowledge that I may be able to do justice with her (sa) stature in this article.

We begin with the following ayah from Surah-e-Namal:

- “Aur (ilm, hikmat, jaedaad sab mein) Suleman Dawood ke waaris hue aur kaha ki logo hum ko (Khuda ke fazal se) parindon ki boli bhi sikhayee gayee hai aur (duniya ki) har cheez ataa ki gayee hai iss main shak nahin ki yeh yaqini (Khuda ka) sarihi fazal wa karam hai.” – (Surah-e-An Namal, ayah 16)

“(And Sulaiman was Dawood's heir, and he said: O men! we have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given all things; most surely this is manifest grace.)”

As the ayah informs, Suleman (as) inherited everything that Allah (SWT) had bestowed upon Dawood (as) and was his rightful heir. In the light of this it is safe to infer that Suleman (as) was similar to Dawood (as) in every aspect. Whichever benefit one would have got from Dawood (as) he could have expected the same from Suleman (as) during his time. **Hence we can conclude that Suleman (as) was the part of Al Qurba of Dawood (as).**

➔ Since our beloved Prophet (SAW) was the seal of Prophets and there was no Prophet to be followed after him **whom did Allah (SWT) choose to be his heir the way Suleman (as) was chosen for Dawood (as)?** In the following ayah the Quran throws some light on the above point:

- “*Ae Rasool (SAW) Hum ne tum ko Kausar ataa kiya, to tum apne Parvardigar ki namaz padha karo aur qurbani diya karo beshak tumhara dushman be-aulad rahega.*” – (Surah-al Kausar, ayah 1-3)

“(Surely We have given you Kausar, Therefore pray to your Lord and make a sacrifice. Surely your enemy is the one who shall be without posterity)

Allah (SWT) has **granted ‘Kausar’** to the holy Prophet (SAW) as per the ayah and He (SWT) ends the *Surah* with a promise that it would be the Prophet’s enemy who shall be without posterity. Thus it can be inferred that the term **‘Kausar’ is related to posterity of the holy Prophet (SAW).**

While commenting on the time of revelation of above *Surah-al-Kausar*, the scholars have explained that an infidel denounced the Prophet (SAW) when one of his children died and said that he (pbuh) is now without offspring, therefore when he dies his name will die with him. In order to negate them and to reassure the holy Propet (SAW) this *Surah* was revealed.

In Majma’al Bayan, Tabarsi has commented on the *Surah*: “It was said that **Kausar** means **abundant benevolence**, it has also been said that it means **the multiplicity of a given person**; and **the descendants of Fatema (sa) have enormously multiplied** in a way that they will exist until the Day of Resurrection.”

Fakhruddin Razi has quoted comments of few scholars: “Since this chapter was revealed to refute the claim of an infidel who attempted to denounce the Prophet (SAW) for not having sons, it becomes clear that the meaning given here is that **Allah (SWT) gave the Prophet (SAW) offspring, which will be everlasting.**”

Thus **Syeda Fatema (sa)** is the **abundant benevolence** bestowed upon the holy Prophet (SAW) by Allah (SWT) and it is through her lineage, the progeny of the holy Prophet (SAW) would continue to multiply and grow.

The holy Prophet (SAW) has confirmed this in the following hadith:

“Surely Allah made every Prophet’s progeny proceed from his own loins and **made my progeny proceed from Ali’s loins.**” (Ref: Khawarazmi in *Manaqib*, p 229, Muhib Ad-Din-Tabari in *Dhakhaer al-Uqbi*, Hamueeni in *Faraed As-Semtain*, Dhahabi in *Mizan al-Etedal*, Ibn Hajar in *al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqa* p.74, Mirza Hindi in *Muntakhab Kanz al-Umal*, Zarqani in *Sharh Mawahib Ladonyyah*, and Qandouzi in *Yanabi’ al-Mawaddah* p.138.)

With the following ayah let us further substantiate our argument that Lady Fatema (sa) and her family are *Al Qurba* of the holy Prophet (SAW):

- “*Aur Sahaban e Karabat Khuda ki kitab main baham ek dusre ke (banisbat auron ke) zyada haqdar hai*” – (Surah-e-Anfal, ayah 75)

“But kindred by blood have prior rights against each other in the Book of Allah.”

The ayah says that the kindred by blood have been given prior rights against each other. There is a tradition of the holy Prophet (SAW) by the authority of Imam Hussain (as) to explain the above ayah. In *Al-Nusoos*, Al-Siddooq quotes Imam Al-Husain who said when Allah sent down this ayah — ***the blood relations are nearer one to another in the Book of Allah*** — Hussain (as) asked his grandfather (the Prophet) for explanation. The Prophet (pbuh) answered, “**Grandson, when I die, your father Ali, who is nearest to me, has the Supreme Title over anybody else for succeeding me. When your father passes away then your brother Al-Hasan has the Supreme Title over others, and when Al-Hasan passes away, you have the Supreme Title for succeeding him.”**

And for Syeda Fatema (sa) the holy Prophet (SAW) has said: “**Fatema is part of me, and whoever pleases her, pleases me.**” (Ref: *Al-Sawa'eq Al-Muhriqa*)

In yet another tradition related to Syeda Fatema (sa) the holy Prophet (SAW) has instructed Imam Ali (as): “**Ali execute that which Fatema commands you to do, for I have commanded her to (perform certain affairs) which Gabriel ordered me to do. Be informed, Ali that I am happy with him who my daughter is happy with, so is my Lord and the angels. Ali, Cursed is he who oppresses her; Cursed is he who usurps her right.**”

Thus in the light of above ayah and the traditions of the holy Prophet (SAW) we can infer that **Fatema (sa) and her family - Imam Ali (as), Imam Hasan (as) and Imam Hussain (as), are *Al Qurba* of the Prophet (SAW).** And our above inference gets validated in the following ayah by the Holy Quran:

- “*Phir jab tumhare paas ilm (Quran) aa chuuka us ke baad bhi agar tum se koi (Nasrani) Isa (a.s) ke baare main hujjat kare to kaho ki achha maidaan main aao Hum apne beton ko bulaaen tum apne beton ko, Hum apni aurton ko bulaaen tum apni aurton ko, Hum apni jaanon ko bulaaen tum apni jaanon ko, uske baad Hum*

sab milkar Khuda ki baargaah main gid gidaen aur jhooton per Khuda ki la'anat karein..” – (Surah-e-Aale-Imran, ayah 61)

*“(...If any one disputes in this matter with thee, now after (full) knowledge hath come to thee say: “Come! Let us gather together, - **our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves.** Then let us earnestly pray and invoke the curse of God on those who lie.)”*

When the Christians of Najran contested the Prophethood of holy Prophet (SAW), Allah (SWT) instructed the holy Prophet (SAW) to call both the parties for a ‘*Mubahela*’.

As instructed in the verse, each party was to bring their women, their sons and themselves. While the Christians brought a great delegation of learned scholars, **the holy Prophet (SAW) summoned Hasan (as) and Hussain (as) in place of his sons. Fatema (sa) represented women of his house and Mawla Ali (A.S) represented part of his soul.** Both the parties then were needed to pray and invoke curse of Allah on the liars.

The fact that on the orders of Allah (SWT), the holy Prophet (SAW) took Fatema (sa) and her family for a *Mubahela* with christians confirms that **Allah (SWT) considered the family of Fatema (sa) as the Prophet’s family** and in the hour of crisis it was always her family that the holy Prophet (SAW) dependent on.

The pious progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW) descended from Fatema (sa), who were (and are) the guardians of Islam. Besides the twelve Infallible Imams (as) if we have a look at the history of Islam, we come across innumerable Saiyeds – the descendants of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and her daughter Fatema (sa), among whom we can trace countless Islamic scholars, authors, jurisprudents, narrators, interpreters, and devoted commanders, who struggled hard to safeguard the teachings and precepts of Islam. Thus there can be no better ‘*Kausar*’ than the Syeda Fatema (sa) who brought immense benefits and benevolence to the holy Prophet (SAW).

➔ There is one more point worth pondering upon related to the reference of Syeda Fatema (sa) as ‘*Kausar*’ in the holy Quran. **Pond of *Kausar* is such a pious place that a hypocrite however hard he tries would not be able to reach there, while it is a reward for a true believer.** Similar is the **importance of Fatema (sa) in Islam.** A hypocrite, however hard he tries, would never be able to love her and her family while the pious love for her family in the heart of a true believer is a divine shelter for him in this world and hereafter as well.

We started this article contemplating on the *ayah 16* from *Surah-e-An Namal* which said that Suleman (as) inherited every virtue of Dawood (as). Now let us see the similarities between the holy Prophet (SAW) and his beloved daughter Syeda Fatema (sa) as aptly described by Quran. This would further help us to prove that Syeda Fatema (sa) is the part of *Al Qurba* and the reference point in the *ayah 42:23* of the holy Quran.

In *Surah-e-Qalam*, **Allah praises the exemplary character** of the beloved Prophet (SAW) in the following manner:

- ‘*Aur tumhare waaste yaqinan wo ajr hai jo kabhi khatam hi na hoga. Aur beshak tumhare **akhlaaq bade a’ala darje** ke hai.* – (*Surah-e-Qalam*, ayah 3-4)

*“(And most surely you shall have a **reward never to be cut off**. And indeed you possess an **exemplary character**.)”*

In *Surah-e-Ahzab*, Allah (SWT) informs **the people of the house** that He (SWT) has desired to keep them away from impurity and **made them thoroughly purified**. Thus the people of house also have **exemplary and purified character similar to the holy Prophet (SAW)**

- “*Ae **Paighambar ki Ahl-ul-bait** Khuda to buss yeh chahta hai ke tum ko har tarah ki **burai se door rakkhe aur itna paak rakkhe jitna paak rakhne ka haq hai**”* - (*Surah-e-Ahzab*, Ayah 33)

“Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying.”

Tabrani has quoted Abi Hamra who was a witness to the Prophet's daily habit: "For six months I regularly saw the Messenger of Allah who on **approaching the door of Ali (as) and Fatema (sa)**, used to recite the above verse.

Thus the Prophet's daily habit of stopping at his daughter Fatema's (sa) house **and addressing her Household as Ahlul-Bait** was to expound the meaning of the term *Ahlul-Bait* and practically explain to the Muslims the verse of purification and the people referred in this verse. To be more precise, he was drawing the attention of the Muslim nation **towards the significance of his Ahlul-Bait and their leadership after him so that the Muslims should love, obey and follow them.**

On the similarity of the holy Prophet (SAW) and Syeda Fatema (sa), Lady Aisha has said : “I have not seen **anyone more similar to the Messenger of Allah’s habit of speech and dialogue than Fatema (sa).**” (*Ref: Bihaqi Sunah V 7, P101*)

➔ Apart from the above similarity of character and personality, there is one more similarity mentioned in Quran. For this we will see the following ayah now:

- “*Iss main shak nahin ke **Khuda aur uske farishte paighambar (aur unki aal) per durood bhejte hai to ae imaandaro tum bhi durood bhejte raho aur baraabar salaam karte raho**”.* – (*Surah-e-Ahzaab*, ayah 56)

*“(Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet; **O you who believe!** call for **(Divine) blessings on him** and **salute him with a (becoming) salutation.**)”*

The ayah has ordered the believers to send ‘durood’ and salutations on the Prophet Mohammed (SAW) regularly. This is a divine order which every school of Islamic thought follows.

When this verse was revealed, someone asked the Holy Prophet (SAW) as to how i.e. in what words should the believers recite ‘Salawat’ or ‘Durood’ to him. He said:

*“O Lord! Bestow **Thy Mercy and Grace upon Mohammed and the Progeny of Mohammed** as Thou didst bestow Thy mercy and blessings upon Ibrahim and the progeny of Ibrahim, verily Thou art the Most praised and the Most Glorious One.”*

There is one more similar reference mentioned in Bukhari Vol 3 Page 127. According to this Prophet Mohammed (SAW) prohibited the ummah to say an incomplete Salawaat. When asked, the Prophet replied:

“Do not just say: ‘O’ Allah! Send blessings on Muhammad’ and stop there, instead say, “Allahumma Salli ala Muhammad **wa Aale Muhammad**”. **Thus he included Aale Mohammed (Ahlulbait) in the Salawaat for him** and without their mention the ‘Salawat’ was incomplete and hence became invalid.

And Allah (SWT) sends His Mercy and Blessings to Ahlulbait in the following ayah:

- *“Ae Ahl-ul-bait (Nabuwwat) tum per Khuda ki rehmat wa Usski barkatein (naazil ho).” – (Surah-e-Hud, ayah 73)*

“(The Mercy of Allah and His Blessings are on you, O Ahl-ul-bait)”

Whenever the holy Prophet (SAW) visited Syeda Fatema’s (sa) house, he would hold the door and say **‘Assalam-alaykum Ya Ahl-ul-bait’**. (Ref: Durr-e-Mansoor, Mulla Jalaluddin Suyuti, Vol 5, Page 198-199)

➔ The various ayahs which we pondered upon and the subsequent references and ahadith which we saw gave us the result that Syeda Fatema Zehra (sa) was a true heir to the holy Prophet (SAW) in every aspect. She had a purified character like him. She was similar in personality and her family is also the part of ‘durood’ which is mandatory for the ‘ummah’ to offer to the holy Prophet (SAW). Now let us see her stature vis-à-vis Allah (SWT).

- *“Khuda to saare aasman wa zameen ka Noor hai, uske Noor ki misaal aisi hai jaise ek taak (sina) hai jismain ek roshan charaagh ho aur charaagh ek shishe ki qandeel main ho aur qandeel apni goya ek jagmagata hua roshan sitara (wo charaagh) zaitun ke aise Mubarak darakht (ke tael) se roshan kiya jaae jo na purab ki taraf ho aur na paschim ki taraf balke bicho-bich maidan main uska tael aisa shafaaf ho ke agar che aag uuse chuae bhi nahin taahum aisa ma’lum ho ke aap hi aap roshan ho jaeega gharaz ek Noor naihain balke Noor Ala Noor (Noor ki Noor per joat pad rahi hai) Khuda apne Noor ki taraf jise chahta hai hidayat karta hai aur Khuda logo ke*

samajhane ke waaste mislain bayaan karta hai aur Khuda to har cheez se khoob waqif hai. – (Surah-e-Noor, ayah 35)

“(Allah is the Noor of the heavens and the earth. The *Parable of His Noor is as if there were a Lantern* and within *it a Lamp*: the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: *Light upon Light! Allah doth guide whom He will to His Light: Allah doth set forth Parables for men: and Allah doth know all things.*)”

In the above ayah Allah (SWT) defines Himself. The ayah says He (SWT) is the *Noor* of the Heavens and the earth and **the Parable of His Noor is like a Lantern.**

Commenting on the above ayah Ali ibn Muhammad and Muhammad ibn al-Hassan have narrated from Sahl ibn Ziyad from Muhammad ibn al-Hassan ibn Shammun from ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Asamma from ‘Abd Allah ibn al-Qasim from Salih ibn Sahl al-Hamadani a tradition of Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq (as) about Syeda Fatema Zehra (sa). According to the Imam (as) : **‘Lantern’ metaphorically stands for the Holy lady Fatema (sa).**

Now if we observe the above ayah and the above tradition which we discussed, we can say that **Allah (SWT) has defined His Light as the Lantern which refers to Syeda Fatema (sa).** Hence it is justified to claim that **Fatema (sa) is the personification of the Light of Allah (SWT).**

May be that is the reason we find the following tradition of the Holy Prophet (SAW) which says that: **“O Fatima, verily Allah is angry when you are angry.”** (Ref: *Mustadrak Al Hakim*)

Therefore from the combination of both the traditions we can further infer that **the position of Lady Fatema (sa) towards anything and anyone is equivalent to the position of Allah (SWT).** Thus if Fatema (sa) is pleased with someone **Allah (SWT) is also pleased and vice versa.**

And finally before we conclude this section let us see few more traditions from the household of the holy Prophet (SAW) explaining the stature of Fatema (sa).

- Imam Askari (as) has said that we Imams are the argument of Allah (SWT) upon His creations and **our grand mother Syeda Fatema (sa) is the argument of Allah (SWT) upon us.**
- The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said to his uncle Al-Abbas: "O uncle, Allah **the most High originated the Light of my daughter Fatema by which He created the light of the skies and earth** and the Light of my daughter Fatema is from the Light of Allah, so **the Light of my daughter Fatema is greater than the light of the skies and earth.**

Allah took from the Light of my daughter Fatema (pbuh) lanterns hanged to the Throne. Thus, the skies and earth shined and brightened by her Light. So, that's **why she was**

named Al-Zahraa (The Radiant One). The angels said: "O our God and Master! Whose bright light that brightened the skies and earth is this?" Allah send a revelation upon them that says: "This is the Light that I originated from the Light of My Majesty for My servant Fatema, **the daughter of My beloved and the wife of My custodian who is My Prophet's brother and the father of My arguments over My lands.** My angels, you bear witnesses that **I have made the rewards of your exaltation and glorification for this woman and her followers and then for her lovers until the Day of Resurrection.**" (Ref: *Madinat Al-Maajiz* vol.3 p.419, *Al-Bihar* vol.25 p.16, *Ta'weel Al-Ayat* vol.1 p.137, *Tafseer Kanz Al-Daqa'iq* vol.2 p.424)

- Syeda Fatema Zehra (sa) said to Imam Ali (as): "O Abu Al-Hasan, know that Allah, **the Most High, created my Light** that praised Allah, the Most Glorious, and **then he entrusted it in one of the trees of Heaven; hence, it lit.** When my father (pbuhp) entered Heaven, Allah, the Most High, sent a revelation upon him telling him: 'Pick the fruit from that tree and introduce it to your body.' Hence, he did. Thus, Allah deposited me in my father's seed (pbuh) and then He deposited me in Khadija Bint Khowayled (pbuh), so she (sa) was blessed with me. **I am from that Light; I know what happened, what is happening and what will happen. O Abu Al-Hasan, the believer sees with the eye of the light of Allah, the Most High.** (Ref: *Oyoun al-Mojizat* p.46, *Al-Bihar* vol.43 p.8, *Al-Lamaa Al-Baydaa* p.115)

➔ In the introductory section of this article we had argued that the ayah 42:23 could have referred to Syeda Fatema Zehra (sa) as *Al Qurba* since she was present in Mecca when the *Surah-e-Shura* was revealed. Let us now try to prove this point in this last section.

The superlative of the word *qareeb* which means 'near' is *aqrab* meaning 'nearest'. *Aqrab* is masculine and its feminine is **'qarba' which means the nearest 'woman'** and **'Qurba'** means nearness. Thus the ayah talks about 'nearness' to the holy Prophet (SAW). We have argued and proved in this article that there was no other woman as close as Syeda Fatema Zehra (sa) to the holy Prophet (SAW); so **'qurba' refers to the nearness of Syeda Fatema Zehra (sa) with the holy Prophet (SAW)** and she is definitely the reference point in the ayah no. 42:23.

We can further prove the above point in the light of "*Hadeeth-e-Kisa*" (The event of blanket). This hadeeth is a *tafseer* of *ayah-e-tatheer* (*Surah-e-Ahzab*, ayah 33) narrated by Jabir Ibn-e-Abdullah Ansari (R.A) from the authority of Syeda Fatema (sa). The excerpt of the hadeeth is as follows:

- "Then the Lord, Almighty Allah said: 'O My Angels! O inmates of the Heavens! ***I created this solid firmament, well-stretched earth, well-lighted moon, shining sun, rotating planets, rippling oceans, floating boats, and all other things for the sake and love of these five persons who are inside the cloak.***'

At this, the Archangel Jibraeel (A.S) said: 'O Lord! Who are they inside the cloak?'

*The Lord said: ‘**They are Ahl-ul-Bait of the Prophet and the assets of the Prophethood. They are Fatema (sa), her father, her husband and her two sons.**’*

Thus it can be seen from the above hadeeth that Allah (SWT), while introducing Panjetan Paak (as) to His angels, made Syeda Fatema (sa) as the reference point and remaining others were introduced through her relationship with them.

Referring to the ayah 42:23 many authentic commentators have mentioned that in the ayah it is made compulsory for the Muslim nation to love the relatives of the holy Prophet (SAW). And these kith and kin of the beloved Prophet are : **Fatema (sa), Ali (as) and their children Hassan (as) and Hussain (as).** (Ref: Sa’labi, Suyuti, Baidhavi, Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmed ibn Hambal, Allama Zamkhashri Vol 3, P 68).

➔ Syeda Fatema (sa) has been bestowed upon with such a stature to which words cannot do justice. However I derive satisfaction that my efforts in this article have helped to refute the false claims made by the commentator with respect to the ayah 42:23. And I would like to sign off with the golden words written by the great shayar-e-Ahlulbait Mir Anees on the stature of Syeda Fatema (sa):

“Haan ae zabaan khamosh adab ka hai yeh muqaam, Kausar se mooh ko dhole to le Fatema (sa) ka naam.”

“Ae dil bajuz durood na kuch kijiyo kalaam, Ae kalik apne sar ko jhuka de ba ehteram”

“Kaghaz pe pehle Surah-e-Maryam ko dam karoon, tab Fatema (sa) ki asmat o iffat raqam karoon.”

